

AMENDMENT AND PRESENTATION OF CLAIMS

Please replace all prior claims in the present application with the following claims.

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

processing, at a processor, a plurality of toponyms, wherein each of the plurality of toponyms

has one or more associated readings;

for each document within a plurality of documents, identifying geo-textual correlations

among the readings ~~of~~ associated with the plurality of toponyms;

selecting one of the plurality of toponyms;

selecting a reading ~~of the one~~ associated with the selected toponym; and

determining a value for a confidence that the selected toponym is associated with the selected

reading,

wherein determining said value involves a mathematical summation over the plurality of

documents in which geo-textual correlations were identified that involved ~~that toponym-~~
~~reading pair~~ the selected toponym and the selected reading.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

using the value for the confidence ~~generated for the selected toponym-reading pair~~ to rank

documents according to their relevance to a search query.
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

selecting a starting value for the confidence ~~for that selected toponym pair~~,

wherein computing the value further includes modifying the starting value based on the

identified geo-textual correlations within the plurality of documents.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein selecting the starting value involves using a method of uniform priors.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein identifying geo-textual correlations includes identifying within the plurality of documents toponyms that have associated geographic locations that are nearby to each other.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein identifying geo-textual correlations includes identifying spatial correlation among geographic references of toponyms that are in textual proximity.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein textual proximity means within the same document.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein textual proximity means within the same document or any document closely linked with said same document.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
processing the plurality of documents by a named entity tagger prior to identifying the geo-textual correlations.

10. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:
generating, at a processor, information for ranking a target document that includes a plurality of toponyms for which there is a corresponding plurality of toponym-place pairs,

wherein the place of each toponym-place pair of the plurality of toponym-place pairs identifies a geographical location or region designated by the toponym;

for a selected toponym-place pair of the plurality of toponym-place pairs that is found within the target document:

obtaining a pre-computed number for a value of a confidence that the toponym of the selected toponym-place pair refers to the place of the selected toponym-place pair, said pre-computed number derived from a statistical observation about a plurality of documents;

determining if another toponym is present within the target document that has an associated place that is geographically related to the place referred to by the selected toponym-place pair; and

if the other toponym is identified within the target document that has an associated place that is geographically related to the place referred to by the selected toponym-place pair, boosting the value of the confidence for the selected toponym-place pair for the target document.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein determining if the other toponym is present within the target document that has an associated place that is geographically related to the place referred to by the selected toponym-place pair involves identifying the other toponym based, at least in part, on the other toponym having an associated geographic region that encompasses the place referred to by the selected toponym-place pair.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein determining if the other toponym is present within the target document that has an associated place that is geographically related to the place referred to by the selected toponym-place pair includes identifying the other toponym based, at least in part, on the other toponym having an associated place that is geographically nearby the place referred to by the selected toponym-place pair.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising:

computing a geographical distance between the place associated with the identified toponym and the place referred to by the selected toponym-place pair.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein boosting involves calculating an adjustment value by computing an adjustment boosting function with the computed geographical distance as an input variable, said adjustment boosting function being monotonically decreasing for increasing values of the input variable.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein boosting further involves deriving an initial boosting value from input including the calculated adjustment value.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, wherein boosting further involves applying a sigmoid function to the derived initial boosting value to compute a final boosting value and modifying the value of the confidence for the selected toponym-place pair by an amount determined by the final boosting value.

17. - 20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
computing at least one confidence value for each reading of that selected toponym.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
selecting each toponym among the plurality of toponyms;
selecting a respective reading for each of the respective selected toponyms; and
for each selected toponym-reading pair, computing a respective confidence that the each
respective selected toponym means that respective selected reading.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein a reading of a toponym is a
geographical location or region designated by the toponym.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein computing said value is done
iteratively to arrive at the value for the confidence that the selected toponym means that selected
reading.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the mathematical summation
is of previously determined confidences.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the associated place is
different from the place referred to by the selected toponym-place pair.

27. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

at least one processor; and

at least one memory including computer program code for one or more programs,

the at least one memory and the computer program code configured to, with the at least one processor, cause the apparatus to perform at least the following,

process a plurality of toponyms, wherein each of the plurality of toponyms has one or more associated readings;

for each document within a plurality of documents, identify geo-textual correlations among the readings ~~of~~ associated with the plurality of toponyms; and

select one of the plurality of toponyms;

select a reading ~~of the one~~ associated with the selected toponym; and

determine a value for a confidence that the selected toponym is associated with the selected reading based, at least in part, on a mathematical summation over the plurality of documents in which geo-textual correlations were identified that involved ~~the toponym-reading pair~~ the selected toponym and the selected reading.

28. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the apparatus is further caused to:

use the value for the confidence generated for the selected ~~toponym-reading pair~~ toponym and the selected reading to rank documents according to their relevance to a search query.